

ROBINSON CRUSOE'S ISLAND HAS SUNK TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

The Story of the Spot Where Childhood's Great Hero Was Wrecked.

The lonely island of San Juan Fernandez, upon which the hero of Robinson Crusoe lived in solitude until the cannibals appeared and led him through the most remarkable adventures and blood-curdling episodes that ever thrilled the heart of youth—this Mecca whither the childish fancy of five generations has travelled again and again with keenest delight, has disappeared from the face of the globe! The home of Robinson Crusoe is no more.

A mighty convulsion of nature rent the island from root to crown. There was an upheaval of mountains and forests and spouts of flame and dense smoke. When the force of the submarine earthquake had expended itself the Pacific Ocean stretched untroubled over the spot where once the island of San Juan Fernandez had stood.

This is a heartrending tale to relate to the young ones of this generation, particularly to those who have just finished reading the brilliantly illustrated edition of "Robinson Crusoe," which they received for their Christmas present last week. Nor will it fail to touch the heart of grown folk to whom Robinson Crusoe is an indelible memory of days of happiness—a memory that stands out prominently among many. But it is the truth; the island is gone and the story must be told.

For several weeks the officers and sailors of ships arriving at San Francisco and at Australian ports have reported rumors to the effect that the island of San Juan Fernandez had been swallowed up by the ocean. These rumors they had picked up at various South American ports where they had put in for repairs or supplies. The other day brought a confirmation of the story.

The British ship James Kerr arrived in San Francisco with a cargo of coal from Newcastle. Her commander, Captain Powell, told a remarkable tale. He had made many voyages around the Cape and had frequently passed the island of San Juan Fernandez. Upon several occasions he had taken snap shot photographs of it, and once he had put in there for water.

On this trip he came in sight of the island on a calm day. The surface of the sea was unruffled. So light was the wind that the ship barely drifted along its course, and all the sails hung limp from the masts.

For nearly eight hours he was in sight of the island. Toward evening, he noticed a violent disturbance on the surface of the sea in the distance, as if a school of fish had suddenly appeared. While he was looking he saw an immense tongue of flame shoot heavenward from the very centre of the island.

The Captain's eyes fairly bulged out of his head. He stared in open-mouthed amazement at the scene. Another flame shot up and another, and still another, and then a cloud of black smoke that, for a moment, hid all the island from view. The ship was fully ten miles from the island, and the Captain heard no noise. Presently he saw a spectacle that brought a cry to his lips.

The smoke had cleared away and the island seemed peaceful once more when, suddenly, without the faintest sign of warning, the whole mass of land seemed to tremble as if it were struggling to rise into the air, and then—all in an instant—crumbled to pieces and disappeared beneath the surface of the ocean.

The Captain rubbed his eyes. He stared at the spot as if he expected that, in a moment, the island would reappear. Then the significance of what he had seen dawned upon him, and he knew that the island of San Juan Fernandez would never again be seen by human eyes as long as the earth spun around upon its axis. It had gone the way of the mysterious island, of the Lost Atlantis. From the sea it had risen by the force of a volcanic upheaval. Back into the sea it had vanished. The same force that had created it had

destroyed it. May Robinson Crusoe's spirit rest in peace!

Do you know the true story of this island and of its solitary inhabitant? The wonderful tale of Daniel Defoe has fascinated millions of readers of all ages for nearly two centuries, yet few have known the true story upon which this tale was based. And this story is almost as thrilling as the fiction itself.

In the year 1808 a marble tablet was erected upon this island on the highest rock, a spot that commanded a wide view of the sea. The tablet bore the following inscription.

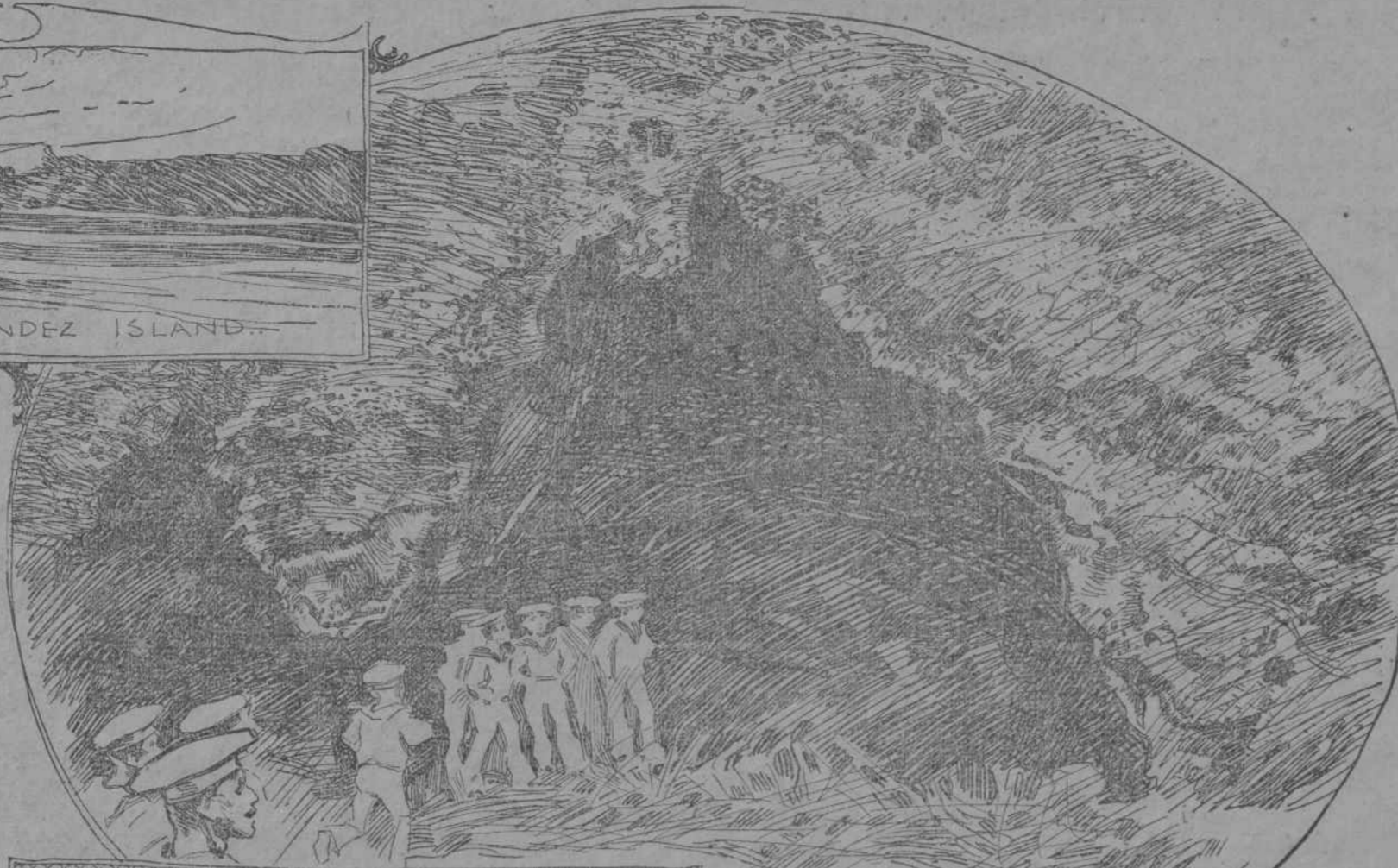
In Memory of
ALEXANDER SELKIRK,
Mariner.
A native of Largo, in the County of
Fife, Scotland, who lived on
this island in complete
solitude
for four years and four months.
He was landed from the Cinque
Ports, galley, 98 tons, 18 guns,
A. D. 1704,
and was taken off in the Duke,
privateer, 12th February, 1709.
He died Lieutenant of H. M. S.
Weymouth, A. D. 1728,
aged 47 years.
This tablet is erected near Selkirk's
lookout by Commodore Powell and the
officers of H. M. S. Topaze,
A. D. 1808.

Alexander Selkirk was the real Robinson Crusoe, and upon his remarkable adventures on this island was founded De Foe's masterpiece. Concerning Selkirk's early life little is known; but he was an unruly boy, as is shown by his participation in expelling the pastor from the parish church, when after the revolution of 1688, the popular feeling was strongly against the non-complying clergy. Being brought under church censure, and being possessed of a dislike for work and a desire to escape parental discipline, Alexander, then a youth of eighteen, decided to run away to sea.

He became an experienced seaman, as was several years later shown when Captain Dampier appointed him sailing master of the Cinque Ports galley. At this time the west coast of Mexico was watched for merchant craft, but nothing being discovered the galley was headed for the island of San Juan Fernandez. Selkirk and his superior, Captain Stradling, got into a violent altercation which resulted in the former's decision to leave the vessel at the first favorable opportunity. Upon arriving at the island Selkirk bade his comrades goodbye and instead of returning to the ship with the last boat, remained ashore. When, however, he realized what his position would be if utterly alone on the island, he called after Stradling to return, to which request the latter turned a deaf ear.

San Juan Fernandez lies in the South Pacific Ocean, three hundred miles off the coast of Chili, to which country it belongs. The island is fifteen miles in length and three in breadth, the generally mountainous interior being well timbered and watered. Such favorable conditions made it a famous resort for the buccannery of two hundred years ago. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the southern seas swarmed with pirates and privateers bent upon the plunder of the richly laden Spanish galleons, it was the custom of the captain of these robber craft to select some lonely island where their vessels might find safe anchorage, both for the purpose of making necessary repairs and to obtain a fresh supply of provisions and water. Various visitors had contributed in stocking the island with goats, and yams had become very abundant. To break up this nest the Spanish Government liberated many large dogs, which, becoming wild, not only destroyed the goats, but became dangerous to those who might land unprepared to repel these savage beasts. It appears from subsequent facts that even these animals became nearly, if not quite, extinct; although some goats escaped among the wild recesses of the interior, as seems to be indicated by later history.

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FROM THE FAMOUS PAINTING BY FLERON.

Selkirk remained in this island in solitude for four years and four months, and when the Duke, an English ship, appeared, he was frantic with joy. His appearance was without doubt of the most wretched, having gone unshorn and unshaven during all this time, while his garments consisted of the "skins of animals," although he is reported to have had upon his back his last remaining shirt.

Selkirk's return to Largo followed, but he soon tired of civilized life and longed for the solitude of his ocean home. He selected a remote resort, and was deemed unapproachable by the fair sex; but it appears that he met with a shepherd lassie whom he married, but the facts did not

widow appeared to claim property left by one of Selkirk's kin. The story of Selkirk's adventures was written by half a dozen different aspirants to literary fame. One of the most remarkable of these accounts, published in London soon after Selkirk's arrival, bore the following grotesque title:

(Providence Displayed; or, A Very Surprising Account of One Mr. Alexander Selkirk, Master of a Merchant Man Called The Cinque Ports, who, Dreaming that the Ship Would Soon After Be Lost, He Desired to be Left on a Desolate Island in the South Seas, Where He Lived Four Years and Four Months Without Seeing the Face of Man, the Ship Being Afterward Cast Away, as He Dreamed. As also, How He Came Afterward to be Miraculously Preserved and

Redeemed from that Fatal Place, by Two Bristol Privateers, Called the Duke and Duchess, that Took the Rich Acapulco Ship, Worth One Hundred Ton of Gold, and Brought It to England. To which is added, an Account of His Birth and Education.

It was De Foe's story, however, that was destined to live, and as long as the child-

Lonely Juan Fernandez Isle Swallowed Up by a Volcano.

ish heart beats responsive to tales of thrilling adventures, of hair-breadth escapes and of blood-curdling encounters, "Robinson Crusoe" will be read in every civilized land.

"It happened one day, about noon"—who that has read this chapter by the light of the parlor lamp, years, oh! so many years ago, has yet forgotten it—"going toward my boat, I was exceedingly surprised with the print of a man's naked foot on the shore, which was very plain to be seen in the sand. I stood like one thunderstruck, or as if I had seen an apparition; I just

I looked round me, but I could hear nothing, nor see anything; I went up to the ground, to look further; I went up the shore and down the shore, but it was all one. I went to it again to see if there were any more, and to observe if it might not be my fancy; but there was no more for that, for there was exactly the print of a foot, toes, heel, and every part of a foot, how it came thither I knew not, nor could I in the least imagine; but, after numerous flashes of lightning, like a man perfectly confused and out of myself, I came home to my fortification, not feeling, as we say, the ground I went on, but terrified to the last degree; looking behind me at every two or three steps, mistaking every bush and tree, and fancying every stump at a distance to be a man. Nor is it possible to describe how many various shapes my affrighted imagination represented things to me in, how many wild ideas were found every moment in my fancy, and what strange, unaccountable whimsies came into my thoughts by the way."

And what man has forgotten his boyish longing to embark upon a ship and set sail for the Pacific Ocean, there, upon the island of San Juan Fernandez, to lead the life that Robinson Crusoe led? To the children of this generation and of the next, and the next this longing will also come, but with it will come the saddening reflection that it can never be fulfilled.

For the island of San Juan Fernandez is no more, and where Robinson Crusoe once stood gazing aghast upon the solitary footprint in the sand—over that spot the wide Pacific Ocean now rolls.

The destruction of Robinson's island makes the fact interesting that Elizabeth Maxwell, niece of Daniel Defoe himself, lived, married and died a few miles from Oxford, in our own Pennsylvania. She was eighteen years of age when she set out on her home, in London, one day, her mother and uncle disapproving of a young man who called there. But Elizabeth, like Crusoe himself, was a determined girl, and, boarding a sailing vessel, she agreed with the captain to be sold for a term of years on reaching the New World, a common custom those days.

Reaching Philadelphia in the Autumn of 1718, she was sold, together with several others who had been brought over in the same vessel. Her purchaser was Andrew Job, of Brick Meeting House, now Calvert, Md., about five miles south of Oxford.

In 1725 Elizabeth was married in the old meeting house to Thomas Job, son of the Quaker who bought her. She now wrote her uncle of her whereabouts and circumstances. De Foe replied that her mother was dead and had willed some property to her daughter. Accompanying the letter was a list of the effects. De Foe expressed a particular desire that his niece take special care of goods he had used in his study, "as they had descended to the family from their Flemish ancestors, who sought refuge under the banner of Queen Elizabeth from the tyranny of Philip."

The most important are two chairs, owned by Hannah Griffith, both coming from De Foe's study. One is in its original condition, regarding the woodwork, heavy cushion seat, and carved legs and back; the other chair has received repairs to the wicker work.

THE CRAZY MASSACHUSETTS TWINS WHO WENT MAD AT THE SAME MOMENT AND DO EVERYTHING IN UNISON.

Lowell, Mass., Jan. 1.—An extraordinary event took place at East Billerica, a few miles from this city, one day last week, when Arthur and Edgar Sanborn, twin brothers, aged twenty-three, became violently insane. The strangeness of the case was largely due to the way in which they acted in unison, showing a sympathy not less curious than that of the Corsican brothers.

There was positively nothing in their previous conduct to denote mental disturbance. They were attentive to their daily labors on their father's farm, and, as usual, were engaged in study in the evening, when suddenly they both jumped to their feet with a wild yell. This frightened their

parents, who ran to them, thinking some accident had happened. As the parents approached them the brothers raised their arms and advanced simultaneously, exclaiming "To sleep! To sleep! Obey or we will kill you!"

David Sanborn and his wife fled horror-stricken from the room, and the next moment were pursued to a corner by their two sons, each with a revolver in his hand. The parents expected every moment to be their last. In this terrible agony they were held for eight hours without daring to move a limb or muscle of the body.

At last, from force of exhaustion, Arthur sank on a chair close by, apparently unconscious, and his brother instantly suc-

cumbed by his side in a similar condition. The brothers fell to the floor and were picked up by the parents and hidden in a trunk in a closet.

The maniacs next turned their attention to the large dog. They took the animal into a room; it is supposed to help them in any conflict that might occur. But the dog undoubtedly noticed something strange in their demeanor and jumped and howled to get out. Then both caught hold of him, and, though the animal weighed 135 pounds, they swung him high above their heads and threw him bodily out of the door.

Mr. Sanborn, their father, fearing that they might commit suicide, attempted to

enter the house in company with Mr. Simms, a neighbor, but again the brothers simultaneously raised their hands and ordered both to stand back.

Not heeding the admonition, both Mr. Sanborn and Mr. Simms were violently assaulted and eventually driven from the house.

A close watch revealed the fact that, after driving everybody else from the house, the two brothers went to the cellar and with farm implements and a crowbar began to sink what seemed to be a grave, eight feet long, four wide and three deep.

What they intended this for is not known, but it is generally believed by the neighbors, Mr. Simms included, that they in-

tended to kill their parents and bury them in the cellar.

After finishing this work they piled their books upon the floor, then walked around them arm in arm, then lifted one each and held it aloft, and this they continued until all the books had been elevated in turn.

They seldom spoke, and their actions while alone in the house were a sort of insane pantomime in which each seemed to have intuitive knowledge of what the other was about to do.

On the morning of the second day after they had become insane, Officers Livingston and Conway, of Billerica, came to remove them to an insane asylum. The doors were barricaded on the inside, and large

planks were used by the officers to break them apart. At the doors the officers were met by the insane brothers, who rushed forward, shoulder to shoulder, with hands uplifted, and both exclaiming in unison, "I'll kill you if you advance! Retreat! Obey! Obey!"

The officers seized them and secured them only after a fierce fight, in which the dog they had secured attacked the officers. When overpowered, Arthur said to his brother, "Resist no more, Edgar," and at once the latter became calm.

They were taken to the insane asylum at Worcester, where their actions were still in unison, to the astonishment of the attending physicians, who state that they

have never witnessed a more peculiar case of sympathetic insanity. When at table in the asylum the officials could not prevent their simultaneous action.

They were no sooner brought to the table than both spat to a certain point. Then one was placed opposite the other, and again they simultaneously spat to the same point. When persuaded to eat, neither would eat nor drink except exactly the same things as the other.

After studying the men together, the physicians ordered them separated, whereupon Edgar became more rational. It was then discovered that his insanity was of a sympathetic nature, controlled in some mysterious way by that of his brother.

